

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 EB-07 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 STR-04 OMB-01

CEA-01 AGR-05 /091 W

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R 210915Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7529

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGUI 1559

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CT, FR

SUBJECT: GISCARD VISIT TO BANGUI

1. SUMMARY: AT THE END OF A WEEK OF HUNTING IN EASTERN CAR, FRENCH PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING SPENT SIX HOURS IN BANGUI AUGUST 18 AS GUEST OF PRESIDENT BOKASSA. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE WERE MARKED WITH FULL MILITARY HONORS AND FOLKLORE DISPLAY. HIGHLIGHT OF BRIEF STOP-OVER WAS RECEPTION AT PRESIDENTIAL PALACE ATTENDED BY ENTIRE GOVERNMENT AND DIPLOMATIC CORPS, DURING WHICH BOTH PRESIDENTS MADE EXTENSIVE TOASTS STRESSING FRATERNAL RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES  
END SUMMARY.

2. SPEAKING AT A RECEPTION IN PRESIDENT GISCARD'S HONOR ON THE EVENING OF AUGUST 18, PRESIDENT BOKASSA ADDRESSED GISCARD AS HIS "VERY DEAR KINSMAN". HE ELOQUENTLY AND EMOTIONALLY PAID TRIBUTE TO GISCARD'S "DYNAMISM, WISDOM AND CLAIRVOYANCE". HE PRAISED FRENCH STATEMENTS ASSERTING THAT AFRICA WAS ABOVE ALL FOR THE AFRICANS AND HE ENDORSED FRENCH PROPOSAL FOR A NEW WORLD ECONOMIC ORDER AND FOR A NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE. BOKASSA CONCLUDED BY ASSURING GISCARD THAT CENTRAL AFRICANS WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK TO MAINTAIN THE "PRIVILEGED" CHARACTER OF FRANCO-CAR RELATIONS AND TO GIVE THEM A NEW VITALITY.

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3. GISCARD IN HIS RESPONSE WAS EQUALLY WARM INDICATING THAT HE

ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE REGULAR DISCUSSIONS WITH "HIS KINSMAN" BOKASSA, AND TO BOKASSA'S VIEWS ON COMMON WORLD PROBLEMS WHERE THE "OPTIONS" OF FRANCE AND THE CAR ARE IDENTICAL. GISCARD SAID THAT SPECIFICALLY THEY HAD EVOKED THE CONCEPT WHICH WAS OF SUCH CURRENT IMPORTANCE, I.E. THAT AFRICANS MUST BE PERMITTED TO SOLVE AFRICA'S PROBLEMS AMONG THEMSELVES ALONE. WITH REGARD TO BILATERAL RELATIONS HE ASSURED BOKASSA THAT FRANCE WOULD CONTINUE TO PROVIDE AID AND WOULD BASE ITS COOPERATION ON MUTUAL RESPECT OF EACH OTHER'S INDEPENDENCE AND ON THE DIGNITY AND SOVERIGNTY OF THE TWO COUNTRIES. FRANCE, HE SAID, WAS WILLING TO "ACCENTUATE ITS EFFORT." CENTRAL AFRICA, HE NOTED, HAD NUMEROUS POSSIBILITIES BUT ITS PEASANTS MUST BE ASSURED AN EQUITABLE RETURN FOR NEW PRODUCTION AND MUST BE INITIATED INTO NEW METHODS. AGRICULTURAL TAKEOFF WOULD BE THE BASIS FOR ECONOMIC RENEWAL AND WOULD CREATE THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND OTHER INDUSTRIES. IN THE LIBERAL ECONOMY OF THE CAR ENTREPRENEURS AND RESOURCES WOULD NOT BE LACKING, HE ADDED.

4. GISCARD THEN REFERRED TO BOKASSA'S PRINCIPAL PREOCCUPATION: THE LANDLOCKED POSITION OF THE CAR. GISCARD SAID HE SHARED BOKASSA'S DESIRE TO SEE A RADICAL SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM THROUGH THE CONSTRUCTION OF A RAILROAD. NOTING THAT IT WOULD BE A LONG-TERM PROJECT WHICH PRESENTED NO MAJOR TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES, HE STRESSED THAT INTERNATIONAL FINANCING WOULD BE NECESSARY, FRANCE WOULD PARTICIPATE. BUT GISCARD WARNED THAT IN ORDER TO OBTAIN SUCH FINANCING AN INCREASE AND DIVERSIFICATION OF PRODUCTION WERE ESSENTIAL. GISCARD ALSO SPOKE WITH PRIDE OF HIS PROJECT FOR A SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT FUND, WHICH HE SAID WAS PROGRESSING SATISFACTORILY AND WHOSE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE WAS TO ALLEVIATE THE PROBLEM OF LANDLOCKED COUNTRIES.

5. COMMENT: THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE VISIT WAS EUPHORIC WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST PUBLIC HINT OF UNDERLYING POLITICAL DIFFERENCES. GISCARD SKILLFULLY PANDERED TO BOKASSA'S PREOCCUPATIONS, PROVIDED POLITICAL PRAISE AND ECONOMIC REASSURANCE WHILE HEDGING COMMITMENT TO MAJOR PROJECTS BEHIND INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION. IN A BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH GISCARD'S PRINCIPAL AFRICAN ADVISOR RENE JOURNIAC, AMBASSADOR WAS TOLD BOKASSA'S UNDERLYING SUSPICIONS OF FRANCE WERE NOT ENTIRELY REMOVED AND THAT CAPT. CONFIDENTIAL

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DOUTET INCIDENT IS STILL A PREOCCUPATION WHICH CLOUDS BOKASSA'S VIEWS OF FRANCE. NONETHELESS, GISCARD SKILLFULLY PLAYED UP TO BOKASSA'S VANITY AND PARTICULAR HOBBY HORSES AND RESULT IS AT LEAST TEMPORARY UPTURN IN BILATERAL RELATIONS. QUAINTON

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